

Applicant has made a minor editorial amendment to Figure 1. This amendment places the application in still better form for allowance.

Claims 1, 2, and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant has amended claims 1, 2, and 5, where appropriate, giving full consideration to the Examiner's remarks. The amendments made to claims 1, 2, and 5 are believed to overcome the §112 rejection.

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kikui in view of Koyama, et al. ("Koyama"). However, Applicant respectfully submits that neither Kikui nor Koyama teaches or suggests all the features of claims 1-5. As such, there is no *prima facie* obviousness.

The Examiner asserts that Kikui discloses a potential detecting step of (i) exposing photoreceptor surface portions to laser lights of a plurality of laser intensities by dividing a predetermined intensity, and (ii) detecting potentials of photoreceptor surface portions exposed to the laser lights of the plurality of laser intensities. The Examiner concedes that Kikui does not disclose a second potential detecting step, but asserts that Koyama discloses a plurality of fine adjustments on laser output in order to have the exposed potential on the surface portion of the photoreceptor varied with a fine increment until the image with good quality is obtained.

However, neither Kikui nor Koyama teach or suggest what the Examiner relies upon these patents as teaching. For example, although Kikui discloses the adjustment of the amount of the light from the exposure device 11, Kikui does not disclose adjusting the amount of light in the manner as claimed. For example, independent claim 1 recites a first potential detecting step of obtaining a plurality of laser intensities by dividing a predetermined laser intensity at predetermined intervals. Independent claim 2 recites a first potential detecting step of exposing photoreceptor surface portions to laser lights of a plurality of laser intensities set at predetermined intervals. Kikui does not teach or suggest these steps, contrary to the Examiner's assertions. Moreover, Applicant regards Kikui's as an analogue type copying machine for which Kikui would not suggest adjustment of the maximum intensity of the laser exposure mechanism. To the contrary, claims 1 and 2 each recite setting a maximum intensity, based upon the selected potential.

Likewise, Koyama does not teach or suggest the steps of which the Examiner relies upon it as teaching. Koyama does not teach a method of adjusting laser intensity. To the contrary, Koyama teaches an electrophotographic photosensitive member which exhibits stable potential characteristics and copy image quality over entire environmental conditions of various temperature and humidity levels. The electrophotographic photosensitive member is formed by using different chemical compositions. The Examiner asserts that Koyama teaches the step of performing a

plurality of “fine adjustments on laser output,” citing Examples 1-5 and Table 2 to support this assertion. However, Applicant urges that Koyama cannot suggest his method of potential detection because he understands Koyama as teaching that Koyama’s Examples 1-5 and Comparison Examples 1 and 2 are tested in the same way. That is, during such testing, the exposure light intensity is fixed at $1.7\mu\text{J}/\text{cm}^2$. See column 14, lines 24 and 59-64 of Koyama. Hence, Applicant respectfully submits that Koyama cannot teach or suggest his potential detecting steps that, as recited in independent claims 1 and 2, involve detection at different (laser) light intensities.

Neither Kikui nor Koyama teaches or suggests a two-step potential detection method. Furthermore, neither teaches or suggests the first step or the second step, as recited in independent claims 1 and 2. Therefore, there is no *prima facie* obviousness, and claims 1-5 should be allowable.

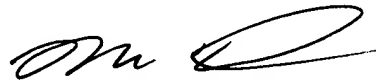
In addition, claims 1-5 are not obvious because one skilled in the art would not be motivated to modify Koyama in view of Koyama. Kikui and Koyama are both individually complete. They take two different approaches to solving two different problems, and there is no motivation to those of ordinary skill in the art to combine the two. As such, claims 1-5 should be allowable.

In view of the above amendments and Remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims are allowable, and that this application is therefore in condition for allowance. Favorable action is courteously requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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